Great article! Thought you might like an extra copy – M.

Women

10 Pt. II—Mon., May 20, 1968—S Los Angeles Times ★

ACCEPTANCE NOT EASY

First Woman Commissioner Had Troubles in Beginning

BY SUE AVERY
Times Staff Writer

ARCADIA — The first and only woman on the Arcadia Planning Commission, Mrs. Harry Lauber, says she isn't afraid to be a pioneer.

But the commission chairman admitted she was discriminated against at first.

Mrs. Lauber, of 1225 Oaklawn Road, said, "The commission was opposed to accepting a woman but two years after I was appointed they chose me as chairman."

And she has also been named president of the West San Gabriel Valley Planning Council.

Planning Problems

The West Valley planning group is an advisory body trying to work out long-range planning problems for 15 cities, 13 school districts, the county and public utility agencies.

The council attempts to avoid duplication in such matters as placement of transportation lines and locations of schools and parks.

But even though she felt there was early resentment to a woman participating in such decisions, Mrs. Lauber feels she has overcome that early distrust.

"At first men felt my decisions were emotional rather than logical. But I just sat and listened so I could learn my job. This helped the men accept me."

Mrs. Lauber, who was appointed by the City Council, has been on the commission three years. The seven commissioners advise the council on zoning and planning.

Her first job in city government was serving on the Personnel Board for one year.

A Place for Women

"I got into city government through Jess Balser, a former mayor who felt there was a place for women," she said.

"And I feel it is shocking that more women are not appointed to positions. For example, when I left the personnel board I was not replaced with another woman. There are five positions on the board and since one-fifth of city employes are women, I feel one should be on the board."

Mrs. Lauber, a strong believer in the status of women, said, "It is still true that a woman has to be more outstanding to achieve as much as a man.

"But a woman can be accepted if she is aware of her potential and opportunities and is willing to assume responsibility. She should not expect special favors or attention but should have a friendly, businesslike approach."

Mrs. Lauber suggested a woman can get involved in city government by first gaining respect and attention.

"She should start in her own community with a service or civic organization," she said. "She should prove she can take on a project and carry it through to completion. A woman does not need a college degree. But she might take a parliamentary law course so she knows how to preside over a meeting.

"She should do volunteer work and be prepared to spend time. Common sense, learning, observing and reading also help. And she should be prepared for criticism and be able to take it in good grace."

LEADING THE WAY—Mrs. Harry Lauber, first and only woman on Arcadia Planning Commission, believe women should actively seek government jobs.
Times photo

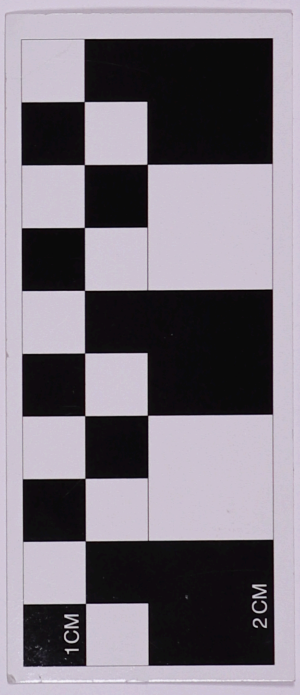
Business Background

Mrs. Lauber, who attended Pasadena City College, gained a business background when she worked 12 years in a middle management position for an electronic engineering firm.

She also has been president of the local Woman's Club and the California Federation of Women's Clubs, and active in Girl Scouts, Arcadianns, Community Theater, Friends of HEAR Foundation, Altrusa International, National Assn. of Parliamentarians and Methodist Hospital Auxiliary.

"I have been inspired by my mother, who is general manager of an Arizona hotel and has been a businesswoman 15 years," Mrs. Lauber said. "She is an example of a woman who is using her potential.

"And my husband and son Lawrence, a student at Cal Poly, are enthusiastic supporters. It would be difficult without cooperation, understanding and support at home.

"Arcadia is an aware community where women are highly organized and can become involved," Mrs. Lauber said, "but it also is very conservative and slow to recognize women's abilities.

"But," she added, "the blame should be placed on women themselves, as well as officials. The women should apply pressure and demand that more women be appointed to boards or commissions."